George Washington departs for 2012 patrol

By Lt. Cmdr. James Stockman, *USS George Washington* Public Affairs

The U.S. Navy forward-deployed aircraft carrier *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) departed its homeport of Fleet Activities Yokosuka on May 26 for its 2012 patrol.

This patrol marks *George Washington*'s fourth in the U.S. 7th Fleet area of responsibility since relieving the now decommissioned carrier, *USS Kitty Hawk* (CV 63), in 2008.

George Washington and its embarked air wing, Carrier Air Wing 5, will provide a combat-ready force that will protect and defend the collective maritime interests of the U.S. and its allies and partners in the Asia-Pacific region.

"By being here, forward deployed and engaged in mutually beneficial relationships with our regional partners, we will promote frameworks that enhance stability and promotes maritime security and freedom of the seas," said Capt. David A. Lausman, *George Washington*'s commanding officer.

During this patrol, *George Washington* will participate in joint, military-training exercises with international partners, which will strengthen its alliances and partnerships to promote a collective security.

"Trust and cooperation are fundamental to our ability to promote peace and respond to taskings," added Lausman. "We seek to build true partnerships based on mutual understanding and respect."

George Washington was commissioned on July 4, 1992 and is the fifth of the Nimitz-class aircraft carriers. Aircraft carriers exercise the Navy core capabilities of power projection, forward presence, humanitarian assistance, deterrence, sea control and maritime security.

EMFR Sherey R. Villar from Newport News, Va., mans the rails aboard the forward-deployed, Nimitz-class aircraft carrier *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) for the ship's departure from Fleet Activities Yokosuka May 26, for its 2012 patrol. Manning the rails is a method of saluting or rendering honors used by naval vessels. *George Washington* and its embarked air wing, Carrier Air Wing 5, will provide a combat-ready force that will protect and defend the collective maritime interest of the U.S. and its allies and partners in the Asia-Pacific region.

U.S. Navy photo by MCSA Brian H. Abel

Safety for the 21st Century Sailor, Marine

From the Navy Office of Information

Having the safest and most secure force in the Department of the Navy's history is the main objective of the safety area of the 21st Century Sailor and Marine initiative. Sailors and Marines do a great job of managing risks on duty. In fact, fiscal year 2011 (FY11) was the safest on record in terms of operational fatalities. While we are currently on track for an equally safe FY12, we must continue to apply operational risk management (ORM) skills to both our on-duty and off-duty activities.

Statistically, the most dangerous thing Sailors and Marines do every day is also one of the most common. Driving a personal motor vehicle carries inherent risk. There are a number of factors that make this even more dangerous: driving while fatigued, distracted, or under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

"What you do every single day in your professional life is dangerous enough, and we don't want to lose Sailors or Marines in their off-duty hours," said Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) Juan M. Garcia III. "While the trends are going in the right direction, we must ensure all our personnel receive the training and support they need to work and live as safely as possible."

Travel Risk Planning System (TRiPS) is a proven tool to help Sailors manage the risks inherent in long-distance travel. Since August 2006, more than 380,000 TRiPS assessments have been completed with zero fatalities.

Alcohol-related motor vehicle fatalities are down across the fleet, but it still bears repeating – if you drink, do not drive. Make a plan for a safe ride home before you take the first sip of alcohol and look out for your friends and help them make the right choices.

Commands must document all alcohol-related driving offenses, regardless of civilian conviction, court-martial finding or non-judicial punishment. This documentation must be reviewed by a promotion selection board or the All Fully Qualified Screening Process, as applicable, before the officer can be promoted.

During FY11, 12 Sailors were killed in sportbike accidents and nine of them had not met their MSRC training requirement. So far in FY12, three Sailors have been killed, with one not completing MSRC training.

Improve motorcycle safety by closing the training gap with the Military Sportbike Rider Course (MSRC), a proven tool for those who ride these high-performance machines.

Experienced riders should mentor new riders and share information. Together we must work to ensure no one rides under the radar. This is all part of the tradition of shipmates looking out for shipmates.

"Live to Play, Play to Live" summer safety campaign officially kicks off Memorial Day weekend. The summer season brings the potential for increased risks, so it is important that we use ORM at work and at play.

With prior planning to manage the inherent dangers, even high-risk activities can be enjoyed safely.

Over-indulging in alcohol makes any activity riskier. Alcohol does not mix with water activities, sports, hiking, or other summer activities. Even if you're just hosting a backyard party, it's important that everyone drink in moderation to ensure no one incurs additional risk for serious injury or fatality.

Petty officer advancements improve

From Chief of Naval Personnel Public Affairs

WASHINGTON – More than 29,000 Sailors are on their way to advancement to E4, E5 and E6 with the release of the Petty Officer list May 25.

Navy leaders opened advancement opportunity to higher levels this cycle to fill Fleet vacancies with Sailors possessing the skills and experience required.

"As part of the 21st Century Sailor and Marine initiative focus on readiness, our goal is to provide the Fleet with the right Sailor with the right skills and the right experience level to maximize Navy's readiness," said Rear Adm. Tony Kurta, director of Military Personnel Plans and Policy.

Sailors taking the E4 test saw their advancement opportunity increase from 30.97 percent to 45.83 percent while E5 advancement opportunity increased from 20.68 percent to 30.94 percent. Those taking the E6 test saw an increase from 10.75 percent to 16.18 percent.

Links to the full advancement list are here:

• Active duty - http://www.navy.mil/docs/CY215_USN_05_23_12_NT.pdf.

• Navy full-time support Sailors - http://www.navy.mil/docs/CY215_FTS_05_23_12_NT.pdf.

• Canvaser Recruiters - http://www.navy.mil/docs/CY215_CVR_05_23_12_NT.pdf.

No ratings had zero back to back opportunity and only one rating (at only the E6 level) saw zero opportunity this cycle. However, officials point out, future advancement opportunity may not be as high as this cycle; but will move closer to historic advancement levels.

Navy's continued efforts to provide a balanced force are proving successful, officials said. As the force becomes more balanced, future advancement opportunity will become more stable offering more consistent promotion opportunity to Sailors over the long term.

Advancement results are posted on the Navy Personnel Command's Bupers On-Line Web page at www.npc.navy.mil.